

A few items that FISTS claims in their filing need to be examined. During the last ten years there has been no significant use of CW (Morse) during any of the responses to emergencies. After September 11, there were no CW nets handling traffic as part of the response. None of the amateur radio responses to hurricanes, local or regional emergencies or even as part of training drills. The FCC acted properly in reducing the required code speed to five words per minute in the restructuring, and now needs to at least continue to move forward by removing Element 1 from the General class license. The claims of FISTS can be rebutted by listening to any of the old "Novice" segments or trying to make a CW contact there. Except for contests these segments are practically empty. The segments of the bands where there are data, rtty or voice operations continue to be overcrowded. In light of the recent WARC-03 proceedings, I urge that the petition from FISTS be rejected and that the restructuring of the Amateur Radio Service continued by at least removing Element 1 from the General test. This will allow the Amateur Radio Service to continue to grow and to attract new people who have no interest in learning an obsolete, low data rate museum quality mode. Those people who enjoy operating CW should be allowed to continue, but technology is moving beyond the point where knowledge of an obsolete mode is valid. CW replace spark transmission before 1940 - and it is time that CW joined spark as a "quaint" historical mode.